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AUTHOR Jones, Robert Y.  
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## ABSTRACT

Surveyed were 201 business establishments in Sarasota County, Florida, to determine available jobs suitable for educable mentally retarded (EMR) graduates of high school vocational education program. Types of businesses surveyed were automobile dealers; cleaners and janitorial services; general construction; government, utilities, and schools; hospitality industry; hospitals, day care centers, and nursing homes; manufacturing; nurseries, golf courses, lawn care; retail trade; and small engine repair and supplies. Cleaning and janitorial services were the largest category of potential employment for EMR people followed by manufacturing and the hospitality industry. Highest starting salaries were in government, public schools, and utilities with the lowest salaries in nurseries. A critical shortage of semi-skilled and unskilled laborers was found with one employer out of five looking for semi-skilled or unskilled workers. Recommendations included adding training in the hospitality and hospital industries to the vocational education curriculum, stressing education for social adequacy, and recognizing that available low paying jobs may be all an EMR student is capable of. (DB)

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SARASOTA COUNTY VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL CENTER  
4748 Beneva Road  
Sarasota, Florida 33581

\*\*\* A Manpower Survey of Semi-  
Skilled and Unskilled Job  
Opportunities in Sarasota  
County \*\*\*

June - 1973  
by  
Robert Y. Jones  
Work Evaluator

Harry R. Holmbraker, Director

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements	i
Rationale	1
Objectives	2
Methodology	3
Statistical Data	5
Analysis of Findings	7
Conclusions	11
Recommendations	13
Appendix I Survey Form	

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Ammon Schrock	President, Sarasota Home Builders Association
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Mrs. Nellie Perry	Home Economics
Mrs. Jean Miller	" "

Mrs. Rosalind Eskew	Business Education
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James Hutches	Diversified Mechanics
Jacob Coble	" "

James Jones	Building Maintenance
-------------	----------------------

John Summers	Horticulture
Fred Gorenflo	"

## RATIONALF

For some years it has been suspected that students graduating from the exceptional child education (ECE) program are not always pursuing the type of work for which they have been trained by the system. A recent survey by the author indicates this is true. The reasons are legion, i.e. higher pay, marriage, geographical considerations, transportation, military service, lack of interest in any kind of work and perhaps, the most important to the school system, the inability to perform, or a dislike for the type of work for which they were trained.

A survey made by the Florida State Department of Education indicated that five percent of the people seem to function at the level of mental retardation. With the realization that over 90% of the educably mentally retarded (EMR) people in our society can become gainfully employed, more and more emphasis must continue to be placed on vocational training. The great majority of these people will earn their living in the semi-skilled or unskilled segments of our economy and since Sarasota County has for some years experienced an acute labor shortage at these occupational levels, it is important that we teach these students the skills that are needed by the private business sector.

In consideration of the above information, it is obvious that a survey should be conducted to identify job opportunities available to the EMR graduate in this community. The development of a work evaluation program that will identify each EMR student's strengths and weaknesses seems to be the next logical goal. A realistic prescription for his training can then be developed that will provide him with the best chance of becoming employed and remaining successfully employed.

## OBJECTIVES

This survey was conducted to:

1. Identify and tabulate the types and numbers of jobs available at the semi-skilled and unskilled level in Sarasota County;
2. determine if employers would hire a person functioning in a range that requires "additional supervision" to master entry level employment,
3. provide information concerning an average hourly wage for beginning employees in the general categories surveyed,
4. acquire specific description of skills required by each job,
5. compile information to be used in curriculum writing, and
6. obtain suggestions from employers as to the attitudes they expect from their employees and to what extent current EMR employees fulfill their expectations.

## METHODOLOGY

Information was obtained by direct contact with owners, managers and directors of personnel for 201 business and manufacturing firms. The questionnaire was purposefully designed to be very general in nature, allowing the interviewer to explore a wide latitude of subject material.

Interviews averaged about one hour. At first it was felt that business people would be reluctant to spend this much time with the interviewer but with the exception of two establishments, the business community was very interested and eager to discuss EMR students and their place in the job market.

The following areas of the economy were surveyed:

Automobile Dealers	8
Cleaners & Janitorial Services	11
Cleaners & Laundries	6
Janitorial Services	5
General Construction	4
Government, Utilities & Schools	14
Gov't (Federal, County & City)	4
Schools (Public, Circus)	8
Utilities	2
Hospitality Industry	41
Motels/Hotels with Restaurants	11
Motels/Hotels without Restaurants	22
Restaurants	8
Hospitals, Day Care Centers, Nursing Homes	30
Hospitals	5
Day Care Centers	17
Nursing Homes	8



Manufacturing	29
Production line work	15
Fiber glass	2
Hand sewing	1
Air conditioning	1
Concrete & concrete	
block manufacturing	3
Printing	7
Nurseries, Golf Courses, Lawn Care	11
Golf courses	1
Lawn care	1
Nurseries	9
Retail Trade	37
Banks	1
Bowling alleys	1
Clothing stores	1
Department stores	10
Drug stores	4
Electrical appl. stores	1
Electrical supplies	1
Filling stations	4
Food stores	7
Furniture stores	1
Hardware stores	1
Home repair	1
Lumber companies	2
Material centers	1
Variety stores	1
Small Engine Repair	
and Supplies	16
Repair	13
Supplies	3

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Total Firms Contacted by the author	201
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## STATISTICAL DATA

(1) Business and Industrial Categories	(2) Total No. Employees per Cate- gory Sur- veyed	(3) No. of Possible Semi-skilled & Unskilled Jobs	(4) No. of Pos- sible Semi- skilled & Unskilled Jobs applied to total work force (2.57xcol.3)	(5) % of Pos- sible Jobs to total num- ber of Jobs Surveyed (col.3÷col.2)	(6) % of Work Force Sur- veyed (14,392÷ col.2)	(7) % of Em- ployees Sur- veyed to Total Work Force (36,955÷col.2)	Avg. Entry Level Wage Per Hour
Automobile Dealers	303	30	77	9.9	2.1	.81	1.75
Cleaner & Janitors	391	195	501	49.9	2.7	1.05	1.90
General Con- struction	106	9	23	8.4	0.7	.28	2.25
Government, Public Schools Utilities	4754	559	1436	11.7	33.0	12.86	2.26
Hospitality Industry	1306	432	1110	33.1	9.1	3.53	1.88
Day Care Ctrs. Hospitals Nursing Homes	2376	398	1022	16.7	16.5	6.42	1.79
Manufacturing	2373	851	2187	35.8	16.4	6.4	2.07
Golf Courses Lawn Care Nurseries	153	5	12	3.2	1.1	.41	1.68
Retail Trade	2552	299	768	11.7	17.7	6.98	1.83
Small Engines	78	17	43	22.0	0.05	.21	1.82
TOTAL	14392	2795	7183	19.4	100.0	38.92	1.92

14,392 is 38.92% of the total work force (36,955)

See explanation next page

## EXPLANATION OF STATISTICAL DATA

- Column 1    Number of employers (owners, managers or personnel directors) contacted in categories indicated.
- Column 2    Number of employees employed by the number of employers contacted (indicated in column 1)
- Column 3    Number of jobs at the semi-skilled and unskilled level which these employers indicated they have.
- Column 4    Number of jobs extrapolated to total work force 2.57 times column 3.
- Column 5    Number of possible jobs (column 3) as a percentage of the total number of jobs surveyed in each category.
- Column 6    Percentage each category contributed to the work force surveyed.
- Column 7    The number of employees surveyed as a percentage of the total work force.
- Column 8    The average starting wage for a new employee in each category.

The total work force in Sarasota County is 36,955 according to the 1970 Bureau of the Census report.

## ANALYSES FINDINGS

### Statistical Analyses

A statistical analysis reveals a most important fact....of the 38.9% of the total work force surveyed, 19.4% of the jobs surveyed fall in the semi-skilled and unskilled levels. Five percent of the people in Florida are considered to be functioning in the range of mental retardation. These people need to be trained to fill jobs below skill level. A Florida Department of Education survey identifies 5% as follows: EMR 2%, emotionally disturbed 2%, social maladjusted 1% and specific learning disabilities 1%. There are more unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in our local work force than this population.

The ten categories of business and industry surveyed were chosen because they represent the largest source of employment in the county. Of the 201 employers surveyed, 58 (28.85%) said they would not hire untrained, part-time EMR students attending the public school system. In practically all cases their reasons were: "I do not use part-time help" or, "I do not have the time or inclination to work with this type of person." The latter reason was given only five or six times. Only 28 (13.9%) of the employers said they would not hire full-time EMR people once they had been trained and graduated from public school. Employers that would not hire part-time untrained EMR employees were twice as many as those who would not hire trained, full-time EMR employees.

Although the total number of employees surveyed is not equal in the ten categories of employment, there is strong evidence to support the idea that 49.9% of the jobs in cleaning and janitorial

services are semi-skilled or unskilled, making it the largest category of employment for EMR people. The second largest category is manufacturing, followed by the hospitality industry. The least number of jobs are available in golf courses, lawn care and nurseries.

Government, public schools and utilities hire 33% of the employees surveyed, but only 11.7% of the jobs in this category fall at the semi-skilled or unskilled level. The retail trades with the second highest number of employees (17.7%) also have 11.7% of the jobs at this level.

The hospitality industry and the hospitals, day care centers and nursing homes have many similar jobs, i.e. maids, porters, kitchen help, lawn care, etc. When only these two categories are considered separately the hospitality industry has 12% of their employees working at this skill level and the hospitals, day care centers and nursing homes have 11%, supporting the original statement.

The total number of jobs at this skill level, in the sample, is 2795. When this figure is related to the total work force, the jobs at the semi-skilled and unskilled levels increase to 7,183.

The average starting wage is \$1.92 per hour. The highest starting wage was in government, public schools and utilities....\$2.26 per hour. The lowest was in nurseries at \$1.68 per hour. Nurseries professed a very low need for people at this skill level.

The description of skills obtained from the employers was used to extract, from the Directory of Occupational Titles, those job titles that apply to the needs of business in this area. The skills were further classified as to the importance of data, people and things which is directly correlated to the evaluation program planned during the coming school year.

### Subjective Analyses

The survey has opened new avenues of exploration with regard to additional skills that must be considered in future curriculum planning. These skills fall in the fields of vocational, social and academic training.

In assessing the attitudes an employer desires in an employee, four employers specifically stated they would not hire a "long hair." Thirty-four said high school students and recent graduates do not have a responsible attitude toward their jobs. Twenty-one said dependability and reliability were lacking and twenty said students do not want to work for their paychecks. Five employers expressed a negative attitude toward hiring blacks. On the other side of the question, twenty-seven employers expressed praise and satisfaction for the work habits, skills and attitudes of the young adults they have hired.

Forty-five percent of the employers observed that students and recent graduates did not have the desirable attitudes toward the world of work, while thirteen percent stated they were equipped to cope with the routine problems of the business world. Forty-two percent did not comment on their employees' work attitudes.

In addition, thirty-nine employers (19.5%) are actively seeking additional employees and eleven felt strongly that welfare was decreasing the size of the work force and encouraging people not to earn a living through productive employment.

In summation, the ten categories were chosen because they represent the greatest number of employees, or largest portion of the job market in Sarasota County. Once again....these categories offer many more jobs than there are EMR's in the population. Twice as many employers said they would not hire untrained, part-time students as those who said they would hire full-time, trained students. Nearly one out of every five jobs fall in the semi-skilled or unskilled area, with an average hourly starting pay of just under \$2.00.

## CONCLUSIONS

The high cost of living and shortage of low cost housing discourages people from living here who are interested in working in semi-skilled and unskilled jobs. Many of the current population at these levels are already working in light industry which requires large numbers of lower skill level workers. Because of these two primary reasons, there is a critical shortage of semi-skilled and unskilled labor.

It is obvious the county school system must evaluate and train all young adults who can contribute to the economy. To serve the tourist and older retired people, the hospitality industry and construction trades are growing by leaps and bounds. Industry is expanding at a slower rate primarily because there is no pool of workers of all skill levels from which it can draw.

Approximately one employer out of five is looking for workers in the semi-skilled and unskilled area. There is a desperate need for more people who are trained and willing to work in the area of services, retail trade and manufacturing. The community cannot afford to neglect the evaluation and training of the EMR segment of the population as it has been proven that they can become a productive work force if educated to be socially adequate and if training is available to develop job tasks within their capabilities. In most cases, the skills and capabilities of the EMR person are required by the jobs that currently cannot be filled otherwise.



The skill training for these people is vitally important, but in addition they must be given intensive training in the area of social adequacy. Forty-five percent of the employers contacted said in effect, "young adults today need to be taught how to get along with others and further, they need the concept of the work ethic."

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The jobs are available and employers are more than willing to hire the ENR. There are many vocational training programs already in progress within the public school system. It is possible that this curriculum needs to be revised and expanded.

The following recommendations are the result of the availability of jobs as indicated by the statistics of the survey, as well as specific requests for training by many of the employers interviewed.

The hospitality and hospital industries constitute a primary occupational cluster that should be added to the curriculum.

Training should be offered leading to the following occupations:

maids, kitchen helpers, janitor/maintenance personnel, porters and laundry workers. Janitors/maintenance personnel need training in floor care, painting, furniture repair, lawn care, toilet and faucet repair, outlet and electrical switch replacement, preventive maintenance on air conditioning systems and window cleaning.

Other areas to be considered are: production workers (trained in eye-hand-foot coordination); filling station attendants, gang lawn mower operators, fork-lift and front-end loader operators, trencher operators, material movers (all types), messengers, concrete workers (including manufacture of concrete and concrete blocks), bus boys/girls, child care attendants (supervised), dry cleaning helpers and stock clerks. These are only a few of the job tasks that are in demand.

Vocational training of EMRs must also concentrate on social adequacies. They must inculcate the student with the idea that working for a living is honorable. As previously mentioned, 45% of the employers complained that young adults have little responsibility toward their job, do not want to work and are unreliable. Many employers said they are willing to train EMR students if they can find a student who wants to learn a job and is willing to assume responsibility commensurate with his ability.

Vocational training teachers must realize that although the average pay of some of the aforementioned jobs is low, many EMR students can function only at this level and these jobs are available. If they are taught to be maids, it is possible that with maturity and experience they will become housekeepers. If they are taught to be bus boys they will eventually be able to be waiters or cooks. Vocational training must be more closely aligned with the needs of the community. The statistics of this survey identify what these needs are. The work evaluation process will identify the student's strengths, weaknesses and interests. The challenge is to match these characteristics with the appropriate vocational training which will reflect the manpower needs in this community accommodating the EMR population.

APPENDIX

SARASOTA COUNTY VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL CENTER

BUSINESS NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person supplying information \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Employer would be interested in employing a student (junior or senior) who is considered to be functioning in a range that requires special services and training: that is, jobs in which training in the public school system is not available at this time. \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

Employer would be interested in employing a student or graduate who is considered to be functioning in a range that requires special services and training: that is, jobs in which special training is available in the public school system. \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

Number of students employer might employ \_\_\_\_\_

Check any of the following that would be necessary to hold a job in employer's business:

<input type="checkbox"/> driver's license	
<input type="checkbox"/> chauffeur's license	<input type="checkbox"/> Total No. Employees
<input type="checkbox"/> telephone skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Total No. in above categories
<input type="checkbox"/> join a union	<input type="checkbox"/> Written test
<input type="checkbox"/> handle money or operate a cash register	
<input type="checkbox"/> meet the public	

Additional information about the job: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Overview of employer and business: \_\_\_\_\_

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